

Remarks

Claims 1-4 are pending in the present application. Claim 1 has been amended herein.

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) over Moronaga et al. (US 5,229,864), hereafter "Moronaga." Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Moronaga in view of Jung (US 5,732,159). Claims 3-4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Moronaga in view of Nakaya (US 6,295,376). These rejections are defective because Moronaga, Jung, and Nakaya, taken alone or in any combination, fail to teach or suggest each and every feature of the claims as required by 35 U.S.C. 102(b) and 103(a).

Regarding claim 1, none of the references cited by the Examiner teach or suggest, among other features, a determination step for "determining a correction area around block boundaries, said determination step including computing mask values associated with the input samples using the filtered samples, said correction area corresponding to an area where the mask values are different from zero."

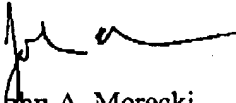
In the Office Action, the Examiner alleges that the claimed step of "commuting mask values" is disclosed in column 11, lines 21-27 of Moronaga. This is incorrect. On the contrary, the cited section of Moronaga is completely silent with regard to the computing of mask values associated with the input samples using the filtered samples" as claimed. The Examiner argues that non-zero mask values defining the correction area are inherent in Moronaga's low-pass filter. In claim 1, however, the mask values are computed using the output (i.e., filtered samples) of a low pass filtering step. Clearly, Moronaga does not teach or suggest providing mask values in the manner set forth in claim 1.

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If the Examiner believes that anything further is necessary to place the application in a condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicant's undersigned representative at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: 3/9/05



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